

Balance with Grace

A monthly newsletter by Grace Durfee, personal coach

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In this month's newsletter, I'd like to share an excerpt from my new book *Balance with Grace: Celebrate the Kaleidoscope of Life*:

As much as we'd like to be able to "freeze frame" or permanently hold moments in balance, life resists our attempts to create unwavering stability. I've been practicing yoga for years and am particularly fond of standing balance poses. What I've discovered in these poses is that I cannot be rigid. In fact, rigidity is a sure route to failure. This means that, even though I'm tempted, I can't lock my knees or hold my breath when I've reached the height of the posture. I also need to accept the inevitable wobbles. Like a tightrope walker, I must constantly make shifts and slight adjustments to stay balanced.

So it is with our lives. Flexibility and agility help us adjust to ever-changing circumstances. Like a kaleidoscope, the many pieces of our lives are always in flux, settling into new patterns, only to shift again. We may long to preserve a design that's particularly pleasing, but eventually some elements will change.

When my sons were infants I was always thrilled when it seemed that they had finally settled into a schedule. Life would go so smoothly when they were in a routine of sleeping and eating at regular times. We'd have a few days when I'd think, "Hey, this is easy!" Then one of them would get sick or start cutting a new tooth, throwing everything off kilter.

Life is like a kaleidoscope, revealing ever-changing patterns. A new design may last for a matter of days, weeks, or months before shifting again. Occasionally elements might stay the same with only subtle variations, but sometimes all new colors, shapes, and elements appear, producing a picture that looks nothing like the old one.

You may at times intentionally twist your kaleidoscope to start over by redesigning your life, perhaps through sweeping job, relationship, or location changes. During a pivotal point in my mid-twenties, I made all of these changes simultaneously. I moved to Boston from Philadelphia, started a new job in a different field, and ended a relationship of five years, less than two months before our planned wedding.

Sometimes the basic design remains the same, but the colors vary, in much the same way that trees in New England change with the seasons. An example of this in our family is the way our sports change with the seasons. I prefer to be a seasonal athlete, walking and gardening in the spring, swimming and playing tennis in the summer, hiking and jogging in the fall, and cross-country skiing and snowshoeing in the winter. My sons mix it up as well. They rotate from football and soccer practice in the fall, to basketball and skiing in the winter, and later to lacrosse and

track in the spring. Just when I get into a groove with carpooling and game schedules, the sport seasons are over and a new pattern begins.

Sometimes we move our own kaleidoscope's lens to set the shards tumbling. Sometimes other people knock into us, creating a new pattern. Sometimes an unseen force, grace, perhaps, imposes change upon us. Sometimes the change in seasons shakes things up for us. Regardless of how much control we had over the transition, we always determine how we respond to the emerging design. We can learn to make the most of any situation, recalibrating and rearranging when necessary. What we make of the changing patterns and how we feel about them is what determines our state of balance or imbalance.

The process I'm offering [in my book] isn't a one-page, ten-step bulleted list detailing the way to balance. That's because there is no single, secret formula for balance. Just like snowflakes with their kaleidoscope-like designs, each of us is unique. So are our preferences. One individual's ideal balance could be devastating to another.

We all must find our own way to balance. Others may offer valuable guidance, but they cannot provide balance for us. Think about how a child learns to walk. He or she usually takes the first unsteady steps while clinging tightly to the hands of a patient, stooped over grown-up. Eventually, he or she has to let go and learn to balance and walk alone. Like that supportive grown-up, [my] book offers guidance and encouragement. Like the toddler, you are the one who must take the steps in order to move forward.

[I invite you to join me on the journey. Visit www.balancewithgrace.com to order your copy today.]

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What others are saying about *Balance with Grace: Celebrate the Kaleidoscope of Life*:

"*Balance With Grace* is a wonderful gift of encouragement that offers strategies for success to all who want to live more joyfully in the world. I love the practical, heart-centered exercises Grace Durfee presents. She truly helps you access your soul's wisdom to enable you to celebrate life."

—Lynn Robinson, author of *Divine Intuition* and *Trust Your Gut*

"In her book, *Balance with Grace*, Grace Durfee shares her life experiences and wisdom, offering wonderfully practical approaches to everyday living. Gently escorting us through the seasons, she helps us celebrate accomplishments, avoid common pitfalls, honor our past, and most importantly, create our present and future with clarity and intention, all toward an ongoing life of balance and grace."

—Alan Seale, Leadership and Transformation Coach
Author of *Soul Mission, Life Vision and Intuitive Living*

"In the modern world, our most valuable commodity is time. *Balance with Grace* provides a wealth of thoughtful exercises and simple strategies for choosing how your precious time will be spent. Grace Durfee's realistic and practical solutions for enjoying a more balanced lifestyle will help you create more joy and satisfaction in your life and work."

—C.J. Hayden, Master Certified Coach, author of *Get Clients Now!* and *Get Hired Now!*

"*Balance With Grace* is a fabulous resource book for those who are over-extended and busier than ever, but still looking for relief, meaning, and balance. Read it all at once, refer to it daily or weekly, or use it as a seasonal planning tool for inspiration. It's a wonderful compendium of resources, strategies, and methods to find grace and balance, no matter what your situation."

—Kerul Kassel, author of *Productive Procrastination* and *Stop Procrastinating Now*, www.stopprocrastinatingnow.com

Motivational, inspiring, authentic and accessible, *Balance with Grace* beautifully explores the seasons of life while providing many avenues for your own self-discovery and conscious creation. It is the perfect gift (of grace) for anyone who is looking for more balance in their life, (maybe you?)

—Deb Busser, speaker, coach, author of *New Easy Women*, www.neweasywomen.com

"Grace Durfee has found artful solutions on the central dilemma of our "go for it lives" in her new book *Balance with Grace*. She openly reveals her own challenges and the process of making thoughtful choices, as she leads the reader through the opportunities we all face in our quest for joy. *Balance with Grace* resonates with genuine strategies for multitasking families. I enjoyed the colorful, practical analogies from the author's experiences and the spontaneous spirit of celebration that is infused in the pages of this new and helpful text. Thank you for helping us all keep the joy in our hearts."

—David Sollars M.Ac. Lic. Ac., author of *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Acupuncture and Acupressure* and *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Homeopathy*