

Balance with Grace

A monthly newsletter by Grace Durfee, personal coach
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Just be
don't do
and you
may meet
yourself

Frances Norton Honich

These wise words were written by my poet mother a few years ago. This summer she retired from her job as an historical interpreter at Jamestown Settlement. She now relishes having more time to “just be.” In addition to a myriad of creative pursuits, she is enjoying splashing in the pool rather than having to be on her feet for hours in the hot Virginia sun. As she describes the new, easy flow of her days, I can't help but sigh, rather wistfully, along with her.

We don't have to wait until our golden years of retirement to enjoy just being. (We also may not choose to retire or financially be able to retire, so what then?) Part of living in balance involves creating a pleasing mix of activity and rest, including work and play as well as doing and not doing. If our tendency is toward overdoing, summer can be a perfect time to practice undoing.

If you have a vacation or an open weekend coming up, allow yourself plenty of time and space to unwind. During our annual camping trip to the White Mountains, my husband and I noticed that after the flurry of activity involved in setting up camp, we were content to while away the time in front of the campfire. I also spent hours at the river's edge reading while the guys built a dam to deepen the swimming hole. Some of the time we simply sat. It feels good to do nothing.

Many people find tremendous benefit from regularly practice stillness. Even five minutes of sitting quietly can do wonders for your peace of mind, your level of patience, and your stress level. Some people use this time for prayer, meditation, and/or deep breathing. I encourage you to explore what practice of stillness or undoing works best for you. I'll list a few recommended resources and others are listed in my blog.

I recently discovered that even my undoing needed undoing. For quite some time I've loved my daily meditative ritual. I'd use a combination of the Silva Method to enter a meditative state and mala beads with a mantra linked to my breath to keep my mind from wandering. Although this worked well for me for a long time, for some reason it began not to appeal to me as a daily practice. It felt too busy. I've read, listened to, and experimented with a variety of practices and questioned which I should adopt as a new approach. As often happens when I bring a question into my meditation, I was soon given an answer: “Undo.” As much as I do during the course of my days, I felt I was being

guided to do less during this daily time of retreat. I now sometime wear or hold my mala beads, but I'm enjoying simply sitting with my eyes closed, focusing on the space between thoughts, gazing at a candle, or contemplating a blossom that I've picked from my garden. I'm no longer concerned with how I'm "doing" meditation, I welcome this as a time to be.

Where in your life are you being asked to do less?
How can you open up to a new level of being?
How do you enter stillness?

I'd be fascinated to learn of your experiences with undoing. If you'd care to share with other readers, I can include responses in next month's reader's feedback section.

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#### Recommended Resources

*A New Earth: Awakening to Your Life's Purpose*, by Eckhart Tolle

[www.oprah.com](http://www.oprah.com) Oprah and Eckhart Tolle teamed up to do a 10-week webcast discussing his new book which covers ways to practice presence and being in the now. Millions around the world tuned in to these events. If you missed out, you can watch or download MP3 files or transcripts of the sessions from this long link:

[http://www.oprah.com/package/oprahsbookclub/anewearth/pkganewearthwebcast/20080130\\_obc\\_webcast\\_anewearth](http://www.oprah.com/package/oprahsbookclub/anewearth/pkganewearthwebcast/20080130_obc_webcast_anewearth)

[www.silvaultramind.com](http://www.silvaultramind.com)

*Pure Awareness: Five Simple Techniques for Experiencing Your Essential Nature*, by Tom Stone

*The Seekers Guide*, by Elizabeth Lesser

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