

## Balance and Transition

It is common for people to say they want to be “grounded”, “centred”, “balanced”, “to find their equilibrium”, or “sink roots into the ground”, or “gain stability”. These are natural and important to maintaining a sense of self, though the degree of need differs from one person to the next. They also suggest movement and a desire to achieve a degree of stillness. In today’s rapid and dynamic environment, “balance” (the word I will use to summarise the ideas above) may be fleeting.

Balance is a capability we can learn and develop. As babies, we developed strength in our bodies to support ourselves, to shift from a prone position through crawling on all fours to walking on two legs. We also had to master balance. Balance is first learned in a still state, and then learned in conjunction with movement. A toddler clings to a door frame or a piece of furniture, developing their vestibular, visual, and skeletal and muscular systems awareness and capacity to hold themselves still and to balance. They take their first step. It is a whole new learning to reclaim balance after a step. It is true for us as we face transition. Transition requires us to relinquish balance, shift state, and then reclaim balance. Balance is not referring only to the physical sense of balance. It includes the balance we carry within our being in our physical, emotional, mental and spiritual aspects.

This process became vividly apparent to me two and a half years ago when I had surgery that cost me my right acoustic or vestibulocochlear nerve (losing hearing and balance capabilities of my right ear). After surgery, sitting up was a challenge. Over a few days I learned to sit up, stand up and walk around the ward with assistance. I then learned to walk on flat, hard surfaces, then flat grass, then sand, then uphill. My brain had to relearn how to balance because a significant portion of the information system it had relied on was gone. All that was with my eyes open. Shutting my eyes was both comical and frustrating. Initially, standing still and shutting my eyes saw me immediately fall. Over time this shifted to falling almost immediately, and then to ‘after a little while’. The visual system is a significant element of the capacity to balance. Lots of training later my capacity to physically balance is vastly improved, yet it is

### Author

[Stephen Harrison](#) BSc (Hons), PMP, FPMINZ

### Abstract

*Balance is a capability we learn and develop, that needs to be regained to some degree for transition to be successful.*

### Keywords

Balance, coaching support, emotional aspect, learning, mental aspect, personal change, physical aspect, spiritual aspect, transition

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*Specialist balance and transition skills*

immediately and significantly impaired if one of the main remaining components of the system are disrupted (e.g. tired, blurred vision).

Some people are highly adept at regaining their balance as they hop from one place to another. Others need more time between steps to settle their sense of balance. As it is with our physical balance, so it is with our emotional, mental and spiritual senses of balance. Where balance in those areas are desired, these capabilities and skills can be developed. Once we develop balance-enabling skills we can then integrate them within our active life. For example, learning meditation and mindfulness practices can support emotional, mental, and spiritual balance. First learned as an independent skill, we can then choose how and to what degree we integrate them into daily life. Exercise, healthy eating, reframing perspectives on situations we face, and shifting our attitudes and beliefs that are not working for us are other examples of creating or finding space within ourselves even while facing change. They can help restore or strengthen our sense of balance. There is no single recipe for all. We each have our own needs around, and preferred approaches to restoring,

balance. Whatever we choose to use, it is a conscious intervention into a hectic life. One of the toughest lessons with fast paced change is that slowing down within, and providing space for self, provides greater energy, focus and capacity to address the external world with greater effectiveness.

When I work as a coach with people in transition, part of what I bring is the recognition that the state of your inner world does contribute to your power and productivity in the outer world, and that balance and transition are immutably connected. The “balance” between balance and transition varies from one person to the next, yet it still features. How important is a sense of balance in your life? What constitutes balance for you? Do you experience a sense of disconnection from “being in balance”? How do you restore yourself at such times? Another way of restoring balance can be through coaching. Is working with and through transition important to you? How about giving coaching a trial? You are invited to have a free coaching session with me so you can experience coaching and determine if I am the right coach for you.

***For more information related to themes in this article, refer to chapter 11 (Purposeful Forward Movement) of: Harrison, S. G. (2012). [Appreciate the Fog: Embrace Change with Power and Purpose](#). Auckland, New Zealand: Xlibris Corporation.***

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