

## **Balance: The Pendulum Swings Continuously** **By Roberta G Pickett**

The new year sweeps in, each year seemingly with a more powerful wind, and the balance of our lives suddenly swings out of control: oh, dear, here we go again. Another year with more resolutions. Not enough time. Not enough energy. Not enough money. Too many projects. Too many commitments. Too much work. How often do we use the words “too much” or “not enough”? Like the grandfather clock, our life balance swings to and fro, never stopping, either moving towards or through or away from that pivotal point of feeling at peace with ourselves.

Our natural state is balance: all parts working together, constantly adjusting. Balance is not static. Try standing on one foot for awhile: your body shifts and adjusts continuously. If you are bumped, you move your arms out instinctively to compensate for the other movement. Just so with life’s stuff. As you build your career, you may temporarily move away from as much attention on family. Then, there is a birth or a marriage or a death, and you suddenly back away from your business and focus more attention on your personal life. Balance is about being at choice: choosing what you want in your life or what you want out of your life. It can be action or attitudes or both.

It’s when you feel that you have no control over the circumstances around you that you lose your balance: when you feel you’ve swung out too far in either direction and can’t move back or when you feel “dead in the water” and can’t move at all. The opposite of being at choice is being stuck (the clock doesn’t work when it’s stuck in one position!), stuck in some perspective that seems to hold no options. “I just don’t have any time to squeeze in exercising”, or “Women can’t get management positions in this company”, or “I’m too old to attract a partner.” When you stop knowing that you do have choices, you give away your power. You’ve trapped yourself into believing there is no escape. Is that true? No. There are always options (granted, some are better than others!).

Where are YOU stuck? Write it down. What’s that stuck place feel like? How does it make you feel to be in that place? What’s holding you there? Is it old baggage, day to day routine, doubt, fear, pain? Now, make yourself (because you won’t want to do it) come up with at least 5 other ways to look at this issue. Your first reaction will most likely be: “I can’t; there AREN’T any other choices.” OK, MAKE yourself come up with some. Don’t judge them; just write them down, good, bad, or indifferent. Create them; make them outrageous, illogical, or unreasonable, if you must, but come up with at least 5 different approaches. For example, if I were a tree frog (or gorilla, or banana peel, etc), how would I look at this issue? And how would the world look if I made that choice? Allow yourself to notice the different feel of each different approach or perspective. Notice whether it makes you feel good or

depressed or hopeful or enthusiastic or something else. Are you ready to choose a different perspective? Which one pulls you the most? Make a choice.

Choose a new perspective. This may end up being just a first step, a detour, or the beginning of a long journey, but if it gets you out of “stuck”, then you are back moving toward balance. Choice is good. It represents a mental commitment on your part. Now, create a plan that addresses the situation itself. Turn your mental commitment into action. Don't try; do. Take some action consciously, and consistently repeat to yourself where you want this action to lead. (“I am exercising 5 minutes today, running in place while the coffee is brewing; I am on my way to being healthy, strong, supple, and slender.”) The pendulum is swinging again. You are in motion. Yes! And may it be a Happy New Year!

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