

Volume 01, Issue 43: The Balance Sheet of Life Part I

Why does finding balance in life elude so many of us? Some of our great heroes missed the point and we are the wiser if we learn from their oversight. They contributed greatly to humanity but left other important parts of their lives lacking. Sacrificing health, family, relationships and time for themselves, they followed their passions beyond the tipping point and lost their balance. This brings to mind the need of acquiring practical balance as we pursue our dreams.

Many of us are leading skewed lives, over emphasizing on some areas, while neglecting others. It is often times deemed acceptable to compromise on family or personal attention if one is doing exceptionally well in career and business. Rising stars in the fast track of achievement are assumed incapable of keeping a thriving marriage, or being faithful to their spouses and being actively involved in the lives of their children.

A friend once asked Theodore Roosevelt why he did not take a more active role in supervising his free-spirited daughter, Alice. Roosevelt purportedly replied; "I can be the President of the United States or I can attend to Alice. I cannot do both."

Many homes in our society today are continually having to do without the attention of a husband and a father. Marriages and families have become acceptable casualties of pursuits for success. Lost in the rat race, we go about life trying to squeeze in key relationships, such as spouse and children. In a time when infidelity and divorce rates are skyrocketing, I think the truly great must have a high degree of family stability.

Relationships give meaning to life. Achievers have to overcome the enormous challenge of investing their lives in causes larger than they are and simultaneously fulfilling their responsibilities as spouses and parents. Echoing the words of Anthony Gitonga in *Made for Greatness*, is the old style of value-laden success a thing of the past? Is the wholesome picture of the American first family, Sasha, Malia, Michelle, and Obama, a family that appears to model all

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rounded greatness, an isolated example meant for another time and another place? Absolutely not! It's a choice that we are all capable of making.

With a keen attention to prioritizing matters that are meaningful to our lives, we need to master the ability to oscillate between two extremes. Our commitment to build careers and serve humanity should draw from the foundation of thriving family relationships. A President should be able to walk from commanding a whole nation to cuddling a child whose greatest need is to spend time with its parent.

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