

SereneScene

Magazine for Long-Term Healthy Lifestyles of Recovery

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ROUTINE CREATES BALANCE IN RECOVERY

Andrew Martin, MBA, CADC II, SAP



"A HITLER SALUTE", Recovery Today Feature Article by Recovery Today

"BE BAD, BE VERY BAD", By Jay Kolo

"Why Patient Advocacy Movement is Muted for Addiction", Alcoholism & Drug Abuse Weekly Feature Article

"STEP 9 TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING", By Captain Larry Smith, CAS

"CHAPTER ONE, MY LIFE EXPERIENCE", By Bradley Q, California

"12-STEP TREK", Step 6



ROUTINE CREATES BALANCE IN RECOVERY

By Andrew Martin, MBA, CADC II, SAP

“Happiness is not a matter of intensity but of balance and order and rhythm and hamony”,

Thomas Merton

Finding balance in one’s life is a difficult task indeed: many people travel through much of their life without balance, whether or not they have addictive illness. When addiction is present, the task of creating balance becomes far more difficult and far more important as well.

There are activities that can help locate those important aspects of one’s life that bring a sense of grounded existence. While everyone has a general concept of what life balance is, it is critical to remember that balance is unique to the individual. Balance in one’s life is also redefined as life circumstances change, as it is necessary to adjust focus and energy to address the areas of one’s life that require more attention from time to

time. Essentially, life balance is found when a series of emotions and behaviors are working in unison to create a synergistic effect that brings ‘balance and order and rhythm and harmony’.

When one is out of balance, a cascading effect of various symptoms occurs, as explained in the OUT OF BALANCE table to the right.



Finding balance in one’s life may seem difficult at first thought, however there is an effective process that can be used if one is willing to invest the time and energy into the self-improvement effort.



OUT OF BALANCE

Overwhelm

Feeling as if life circumstances are heaped on, overpowering, and excessive.

Hyper focus

Concentrating on one aspect of life, to the exclusion of other aspects of life.

Avoidance

Making a concerted effort to not have to encounter a particular person, place, circumstance or emotion.

Relationship Strain

Regular agitation, frustration, impatience, or critical thinking toward a loved one; possibly resulting in reprisal.

Exhaustion

Bodily fatigue, lack of strength, and abnormal emotional sensitivity.

Self-Reliance

Believing that the way out of the situation is to turn toward one’s own abilities, to work harder, to use one’s resources better.

Anxiety

Being afraid that circumstances may get worse, feeling distress of mind.

Stress

Feeling worry or pressure.

Depression

Sadness that is greater and more prolonged that is warranted by the circumstances.

Burn Out

Apathy resulting from prolonged stress.

Illness

Cardiovascular, neurological, psychological, gastro intestinal, respiratory.

Analysis

One must begin with one where is at, so it is essential to build some self-awareness around those areas wherein balance exists, and those areas that need work to create balance. One of the most effective methods of building self-awareness is through working with a professional clinician: if it is possible to do so, it is highly recommended. It is not always possible to work with a clinician, so alternative methods of building self-awareness include self-help programs, family and friends, and self-help exercises such as journaling and/or meditation. Regardless of the method used, write down those areas of life that seem to have appropriate balance, and write down those areas where balance is not sufficient.

Planning

With planning, comes intention and organization: both necessary for any change management effort. Planning must encompass the maintenance of one's working balance efforts and incorporate the new balance efforts discovered in the analysis phase. An effectual plan will start with the overall goal/objective and break down the measurable component parts responsible for achieving that goal/objective. Each of the measurable component parts, or actions, will have a target date for completion. If possible, each action will also have an accountability partner in place as well.

Example:

Goal	Action	Target Date	Measure	Support	Status
Reading	Read 3 hours per week	January 1	Add up reading time for the week on every Sunday night	Spouse	
Meditate	Meditate 30 minutes daily	October 1	Meditate every morning before breakfast	Spouse	

Implementation

Once a solid plan is in place, it is time to put it into practice. Be open about the change effort: perhaps ask those around you to provide support as well. It is normal to be nervous about the change effort: there may be false starts and stutters; do not let that discourage the effort.

Monitor

Measure the actions and keep the status updated for the goal. Be careful to be realistic with the progress made. Life changes do not happen suddenly, they take time and persistence. Be certain to reward positive efforts and progress toward the goal.

Example:

Goal	Action	Target Date	Measure	Support	Status
Reading	Read 3 hours per week	January 1	Add up reading time for the week on every Sunday night	Spouse	Up to 2 hours consistently
Meditate	Meditate 30 minutes daily	October 1	Meditate every morning before breakfast	Spouse	3 times per week

Revise

Sometimes the goals are too great to accomplish in the time allotted: that is OK. Action plans such as these are meant to be revised. It is important to have realistic goals and to be able to achieve them. If it is simply not possible to obtain a goal at this time, revise the goal and implement.

Example:

Goal	Action	Target Date	Measure	Support	Status
Reading	Read 2 hours per week	January 1	Add up reading time for the week on every Sunday night	Spouse	Up to 2 hours consistently
Meditate	Meditate 30 minutes daily	October 1	Meditate every morning before breakfast	Spouse	3 times per week

The effort is not finished once balance has been obtained. It is one thing to get into balance, and it is entirely another to stay in balance. It is now recommended that one introduce a routine into one's life in order to facilitate long-term life balance. A routine implies repetitive duties that must be done regularly or at specific intervals. When integrated with the balanced living goals, a routine will extend the benefit of living in balance until life circumstances change and it becomes necessary to revisit life balance and develop a new routine.

Up to this point in the change effort, motivation has been rooted in accomplishing something new and realizing immediate benefit. Now that goals have been accomplished, the motivation to continue may dwindle somewhat. This is when the proverbial 'rubber meets the road' and one must establish a long enough period of time to develop new habits. In order to assist in this effort, a process approach may be helpful.



Motivation

One must be honest with yourself; what really motivates your activity? What is the real reason why change is being pursued? If one can identify the true motivator, success is far more likely.

Influence

Does the day happen to you, or do you act as the primary influence throughout the day? The healthy mindset of understanding that you are the primary influence throughout your day will assist in creating a routine that you can stick with, day after day.

Schedule

Do you need to schedule every last detail in your day, or can you take a look at a bullet point list and accomplish it all? Everyone has different needs when it comes to scheduling out the daily routine. Perhaps a calendar or day planner would be helpful, or a smart phone, or a checklist? Whatever the method, keep track of your schedule each and every day.

Look Ahead

Take some time early in the day to review your routine the following day. This way you can be a better influence on what happens today and tomorrow. Less urgencies will interfere with your routine, and when they do you will be better equipped to modify your routine to accommodate the urgencies.

Monitor

Always measure your progress. Your success depends on the positive reinforcement of your daily routine and the life balance you will enjoy as a result.

Progress

Every so often, take a personal inventory of the balance in your life. Are you headed in the direction you choose? Has the progress you have experienced been worth the effort? Is your quality of life improving?

Revise

You will need to revise your plans from time to time. Things will get in the way of your routine, and when they do, you will need to invite flexibility into your determination. Make short-term changes in your plans to accommodate adversity. Sometimes long-term changes are necessary, particularly when major life events happen. Your routine is made to be flexible, so allow it to change with your life journey.

Reward

Accomplishing major change efforts is fantastic. Developing routine around life balance will benefit your entire life. These accomplishments must be celebrated!

Revisit

As you move forward in your balanced life, you may have the inclination to forget what life was like without balance. On occasion, think back to the time in your life when you did not have balance. What was life like then? What was your anxiety like? This will help you to stay proactively motivated moving forward when life begins to feel off balance once again.

The effort of creating balance in life is difficult, however the benefits permeate every aspect of one's life. In recovery, routine helps provide stability and confidence in living a fulfilling lifestyle of recovery and experiencing the joy of the journey of life.

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Andrew Martin
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Andrew Martin began his entrepreneurial approach to business in 1982 at the age of fifteen. Throughout his career, Andrew has fulfilled his duties as a senior executive in viable business ventures in various industries including; health care, sound reinforcement and lighting, electrical safety equipment, commercial catering, specialty metal

shapes manufacturing, and the entertainment overhead suspension industry. Andrew's current business efforts are encompassed by Serene Recovery Network, a group of branded organizations with a common vision of helping people in early recovery to help themselves to a long-term rewarding quality of life without addiction. The individual businesses include Serene Center, a 36 bed transitional sober living facility in Long Beach, CA which also conducts outpatient counseling services, drug testing and monitoring, and outpatient detoxification. Serene Connections, a publishing and professional educational conference production company catering to the field of addiction treatment. Serene Directory, an online directory of professionals and organizations affiliated with behavioral and mental health. Serene Foundation, a micro loan lender providing funding for the continuum of addiction care.

Andrew has authored many articles related to addiction treatment, health care agency productivity, industry specialties, as well as business approach and leadership and has been published in Serene Scene, Behavioral Health, Freedom Newspaper, Sound & Video Contractor, Western Wall and Ceiling Contractors Association Bulletin, Connections Magazine (Australia), dB Magazine, EQ, Lighting & Sound International (Canada), Sound & Communications, Live Sound International (UK), Recording-Engineering-Production. Additionally, many patents and trademarks have been awarded to Andrew Martin for various business related products, brand names, and service marks.

Andrew is also very active in the California Association of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors (CAADAC) Board of Directors and Sober Living Network. Andrew also keynotes for many organizations.

The Therapeutic Benefits of Group Therapy with Allen Berger, Ph.D.

Allen Berger, Ph.D. and a panel of experts in the field of addiction treatment, explain the sociology behind group therapy approaches and the reason why group therapy is valuable in the treatment of addictions.

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The Therapeutic Benefits of Group Therapy with Allen Berger, Ph.D.



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30 DAY COORDINATED OUTPATIENT MEDICAL DETOX

OVERVIEW OF OUR SERVICES

Serene Center Long Beach provides a specialized and individualized 30 day outpatient medical detoxification service in most instances for:

- Alcohol
- Opiates/Opioids
- Benzodiazepines
- Amphetamines

In certain rare instances there can be medical complications which require hospitalization which is not included in the services provided.

Individuals who are appropriate for outpatient medical detox services will receive the following:

- Medically Supervised Detox
- In-Office Acute Detox Medications
- Daily Monitoring of Detox Progress
- 30 day Transitional Sober Living
- Case Management
- Weekly Group Counseling
- Weekly Individual Counseling
- Daily Life Coping Skills Instruction
- Drug Testing Every Three Days

ABOUT SERENE CENTER AND OUR PARTNERS

Serene Center Continued Care Transitional Sober Living bridges the gap between primary treatment and traditional sober living. We help alcoholics and addicts in early recovery learn how to help themselves. Through certified therapy, balanced center living counseling, and education they achieve independence and a better quality of life.

Stuart Finkelstein, M.D. has devoted his practice of medicine to the treatment of the disease of addiction. His knowledge in the field of detoxification is known throughout the continent. Dr. Finkelstein works closely with Lakewood Regional Medical Center and Los Alamitos Medical Center. He also serves as Medical Director for addiction treatment facilities.

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\$3,975.00*

Insurance is not accepted.
*includes a \$700.00 refundable security deposit in accordance with terms and conditions of the service agreement.

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